7: Shklovsky -- 44 T-3 (1891-92) 1916 Yakut
116, 174, 192

'The Yakuts settled on the banks of the Lena, having left the shores of Baikal, whence they had been driven by the Bouriat tribe. After the Yakuts' revolt under Djennik (seventeenth century), their leader, a remnant escaped and reached Kolyma, where they settled. They brought with them to this desert country traces of a higher civilisation. In their language there is a word for 'iron', although on the shores of the Kolyma the fugitives used tools made from mammoth tusks and stone. There are also words for 'agriculture,' 'to read', 'to write,' 'letter', and even the term 'learned' finds its equivalent in the Yakutian tongue. In the Far North-East all the ideas represented by these words are quite rudimentary."

9: Stadling--81 E-3 (1898) 1901 Yakut
116, 132, 192

"In the lakes which do not freeze to the bottom, the ice attains a thickness of 10 feet; in the rivers still more. The ice becomes as hard as stone, its splinters cut the hands like a knife, and if a hard-tempered axe is directed against the stem of a tree its edge breaks into fragments.

The terror of the Yakut winter is increased by its darkness, especially in the northern regions, where the winter night continues for weeks and months. Only in the month of March do 'the horns of the bull of winter begin to break,' as the Yakuts say in their picturesque language. The sun rises higher and higher every day, its rays in the clear air begin to melt the snow on the roofs of houses, while in the shadow the temperature still marks twenty degrees below zero."

9: Stadling--299-300 E-3 (1898) 1901 Yakut
116, 192

"On first coming among the Yakuts the ear of the traveller constantly catches, nolens volens, the word: 'Ä–ä!' (1) Wherever there are Yakuts, the air vibrates with 'Ä–ä!'

1. Ä pronounced as a in 'an', A as in the word 'father', Ö as 'e' in 'her'.

And this is a very useful word, by means of which you can get far. It is difficult to translate, but corresponds somewhat to the English words: 'Yes,' 'Just so,' 'You know!'

If, for example, a Yakut asks you: 'Sakali bilän do?' (Can you speak Yakut?), and, instead of answering: 'Sokk, toiön!' (No, sir) or 'Sakali bilbeppin' (I do not know the Yakut language), you simply say: 'Ä–ä!' he will give [300] you a whole lecture in Yakut on fishing, hunting etc., wound up with a humble petition for a little tobacco and vodka. You reply again with: 'Ä–ä!', or another word which soon fastens itself in your memory, namely: 'Chɔp, chɔp!' (Good, good!)."

40 : Burr--52-53 N-2 (no date) 1931 Yakut
116, 174, 192, 563

"One day when I was sitting on deck enjoying a pipe in the fine autumn air, regretting the fading glories of the golden-tinted forest, a young girl in a plain print frock stared inquisitively at me. She was well proportioned, small and slender and comely enough, with cheerful bright eyes and a dark complexion. As she stared at me I addressed her in Russian and said good morning. She answered in the same language in a pleasant voice and inquired, was I not a foreigner? The ice was broken, and I asked her about her people. Yes, she was a Yakut; they could all speak Russian nowadays except the trappers in the remotest districts.

'Are your people related to the Tartars?' I asked her.

'Yes,' she replied; 'we and the Tartars have one ancestor, but very many years ago we broke [53] off from them and migrated to our present home.' Their language has diverged from the Tartar, and they must have separated before the arrival of Islam in Central Asia, for they were Shamanists, though most by now are Orthodox Christians. She told me that many Russians learn Yakut and marry native women, and their children are more Yakut than Russian.

'How do you say "I love thee" in your tongue?' I asked her.

'Min taptighbwin,' she answered, which certainly sounded an uncouth medium for the tender passion. She then told me that she was studying medicine and was on her way home to Yakutsk on holiday. From all accounts she would have plenty of scope for her profession among her own people."

/208 cont./

133 taking in the whole southern and part of the eastern horizon,
122 over which our route was to take us, opened up before us -- the Kullár Range, which, running in a northeasterly direction, seemingly parallel to the Chara-ulách Range, forms the watershed here between the Omoloí and the Jana /Yana/ basin. Although both the Kullár and the Chara-ulách ranges are probably only spurs of the main watershed between the Lena and the Jana, whose collective name, however, we could not discover, their appearance here is very different. Instead of the frequently picturesque, jagged, often conically-shaped peaks of the Chara-ulách, here we saw only massive rounded heights with steep
[137] slopes and broad flat valleys in between. After we had traveled about five versts from the Omoloí across a completely unwooded plain, we reached the /209/ foothills rising steeply, but not high, and covered with woods, and finally, after another six to eight versts, the completely treeless heights of the mountains; in the valley of an insignificant tributary of the Omoloí, the Kylagóttu, we reached the altitude of the pass, which rises at least 1,300 feet above the Omoloí and is topped by the surrounding peaks by
[136] another 400-500 feet. Here, by the way, we saw only a lower
[192] part of the range, which is said to reach much greater heights in the source area of the Omoloí, which is to be seen merely from the fact that wild sheep (tschubukún) are said to be found there in abundance, while they are still absent here.

122 13 Directly after the watershed we reached an insignificant brook, Kargýchala, already belonging to the Jana basin, down whose broad valley, running southwest, we soon reached the little river Tass-Apká and the stan of the same name, which was to serve as our lodging for the night. The southern slope of the Kullár Range is considerably less steep than the northern slope; on the other hand, the tree vegetation on the latter is more vigorous and goes up farther, probably likewise evidence that the climate becomes milder toward the shores of the Arctic Ocean, which was also shown by a comparison of the temperature observations in Ustjjansk /Ust-Yansk/ and Werchojansk /Verkhoyansk/, as well as the completely unanimous statements of the natives.

Nevertheless, the meadows and fisheries had already been taken over to The Yakuts 271 423 622

some extent by the toyons. The seizure of them was accompanied by a hard struggle since the communes resisted the toyon claims to their own land.

Such, in general terms, was the social structure of the Yakuts by the time the Russians arrived. Tsarist policy between the 17th and 19th centuries speeded up the development of social relations, so that Yakut society just before the October Revolution had already changed very much from what it had been three centuries ago. Nevertheless, many phenomena proved extremely stable and retained their archaic nature until recent times. Just before the Revolution the division of the Yakuts into strata according to the property they possessed was extremely marked. Most of the population did not even have enough cattle for the hunger norm (this norm, when the grade of the livestock was low, was considered to be two head of livestock per person), whereas in the few toyon households there were several dozen head of livestock per person. However, the unequal distribution of the livestock was by no means anything new for the Yakuts. But the question of land was different. The system which had grown up in the domain of land tenure was of comparatively recent origin. Since the arrival of the Russians in Yakutiya, the process of decomposition of the ancient communal-clan system of using the meadowland had been stepped up. The toyons were vigorously seeking to acquire the common lands. The development of private land ownership by the toyons continued to the 1760's, when certain measures introduced by the Russian administration gave it a new direction. In 1765, Yakuts were forbidden to buy or sell land, and in the next few years, through the activity of the Yakut Tribute Commission, the distribution of land in accordance with the so-called "sable" and "fox" taxes or parts of them was introduced among the Yakuts. Later on, in about 1820, this distribution of land assumed the form of the so-called "class system" of land usage, which legalized the extremely unequal distribution of the land, though, on the surface, it seemed to be something like common land usage. This "class system," which was later modified, had assumed the following form by the beginning of the 20th century.

The unit of measurement of land among the Yakuts was the "rick" (*кургуо*), a plot of land from which one hayrick could be mown (the size of the rick ranged from 10 to 30 cartloads, sometimes as many as 40 or 60). These allotments made up plots (*олбуоа*) which were extremely varied in size, depending on the "class," and there were three or four "classes." One first-class plot (*бастыг* or *улахан олбуоа*) was equal to two second-class plots (*орто олбуоа*) and three or four third-class plots (*кенньки* or *кыччыгый олбуоа*). The population was also divided into three or four classes: the toyon households belonged to the first class, and received a first-class plot, the middle households were usually assigned to the second class and the poorer people to the third and fourth classes, each receiving the corresponding clan plot. Thus, the system itself gave the toyons plots of land which were three or four times larger than those of the poorer people. It is true that in return for this the toyons had somewhat greater obligations, but the difference in their extent was extremely small. However, this inequality was by no means the only thing. The toyons actually possessed much more land, having seized it in a variety of different ways. For example, they had several plots, rather than just one, by registering them in the names of their children, workers and so on. It was also the custom to give officials (who were more often than not themselves toyons) additional plots of land, so-called *указ-кургуо* (from the Russian word "ukaz" [edict]), for which, incidentally, there was no payment. The influential toyons also obtained extra plots called ugayy (or kharyy).

423 [804] 565 423 622 [192]